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ABSTRACT

In spite of recommendations of the Commission on the Future of the North Carolina Community College System (NCCCS), faculty salary increases in the NCCCS have not moved the system to the median level of community colleges in the southeast or nationally. To examine this situation, a study was conducted comparing NCCCS faculty salaries with salaries of faculty at public four-year institutions nationally and with University of North Carolina (UNC) constituent institutions. In addition, the study compared 1990-91 NCCCS salaries with other public community colleges in the south and nationally, and with salaries of public school teachers. Data were collected primarily from the state's Department of Community Colleges, and from the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB). Study findings included the following: (1) average faculty salaries in the UNC system were competitive with faculty salaries at other public universities regionally and nationally; (2) NCCCS average faculty salaries ($25,690) were significantly lower than salaries at other community colleges regionally ($31,511) and nationally ($36,600); (3) in comparisons with average faculty salaries in other state community college systems, North Carolina ranked 47th out of 49 systems; (4) the NCCCS had the lowest faculty salaries of the 15 southern states, with salaries $5,821 below the regional average; and (5) for 1990-91, average faculty salaries in the NCCCS were considerably lower than those of North Carolina's public school teachers ($29,276). Data tables and 8 references are included. (PAA)

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Faculty/Staff Research Project

Faculty Salary Comparisons: National, SREB, and State Averages

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INTRODUCTION

In 1988, the Report of the Commission on the Future of the North Carolina Community College System (COF) established a system goal to maintain "an exemplary faculty and staff" (COF, 1989, p. 18). Under this goal the Commission recommended that the North Carolina State Board of Community Colleges and local community college boards of trustees ensure competitive salary levels for community college personnel by raising salaries for faculty "to the median level in the Southeast by 1992 and the top quartile of the Southeast by 1995" (p. 18).

Also in 1988, the State Board of Community Colleges adopted the 1989-91 System Plan which set an objective to raise system employee salaries to the regional and ultimately to the national average. Adequate salaries were viewed as an important component in the effort "to attract, retain, and support highly qualified institutional and departmental personnel" (Department of Community Colleges, 1988, p. 15). Recognizing current economic conditions, the 1991-93 and 1993-95 System Plans call for raising salaries for faculty "to the median level in the Southeast by 1995; and to achieve comparable relative gains for other staff" (Department of Community Colleges, 1992, p. 2).

According to the results of the Administrator/Non-Teaching Professionals Survey, conducted by the Department of Community Colleges in 1991, North Carolina community colleges are experiencing a decrease in the successful hiring of their first-choice applicants. Colleges have, therefore, experienced an increased need to re-advertise vacant positions because applicants declined offers due to relatively low salaries (Department of Community Colleges, 1991). College officials also cited low salaries as the primary reason employees leave the community college system.

There has been much anecdotal information to suggest that there is growing competition between public schools and community colleges for instructors; and that public schools are winning in many instances because they are able to offer higher salaries. There is also some concern that community colleges must compete with the University of North Carolina (UNC) System for master's-degree-level instructors.

While faculty salaries have increased in recent years, these increases have not moved the system to the median level of the Southeast or the nation. As data discussed in this report indicate, faculty salaries have remained at or near the bottom when compared with community college instructors on a regional and national basis.

In an effort to examine these observations, data were collected from national and regional sources, as well as from North Carolina's three educational systems (four-year colleges and universities, community colleges, and public schools). First, North Carolina community college faculty salaries were compared with the salaries of public four-year college and university faculty nationally and with UNC constituent institutions. Second, comparisons were examined between North Carolina's community colleges and other public community college systems in the South and in the nation. Finally, comparisons were made between North Carolina's community college faculty and public school teachers.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

The basic source for North Carolina community college salary data was the Department of Community Colleges' annual College Staff Information Data survey. The survey is conducted in October of each year and requires each community college to report demographic, salary, and employment-status information for all college employees. Data obtained from this survey represent a snapshot of the system's employees as of October 1. Employees hired after October 1 are not included in the survey. Data for employees who leave the system during the academic year are not removed from the data base.

Community college instructors are typically employed for 9, 10, 11, or 12 months. In light of differences in months of employment, salary information is based on monthly earnings and thus represents an estimate of each employee's salary.

Average salaries of university faculty members, including those in North Carolina, were obtained from the Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) report, Public College and University Faculty Salaries Compared to National and SREB Averages, 1990-1991; the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) publication, Academe: The Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 1990-1991; and The Chronicle of Higher Education, August 28, 1991. Information concerning regional community college instructor salaries was obtained from the SREB reports. For comparative purposes, North Carolina public school teachers' salaries were obtained from two sources, data provided by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction and SREB publications.

SREB salary data were used for most of this report to insure consistency of definitions and methods for computing average salaries across the 15 member states. The Southern Regional Education Board, or SREB, is a central facility for data exchange among educational institutions in the Southern United States. In addition to North Carolina, states affiliated with SREB include Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia. Each year SREB compiles and disseminates data concerning student enrollments, tuition, faculty salaries, annual listings of each state's educationally-related publications, etc.

Unless otherwise indicated, all salary comparisons are based on 1990-91 data. This is the most recent year in which comparable data are available. This is not a significant limitation to the findings of this study because most public employees in North Carolina, including university faculty members, community college instructors, and public school teachers, did not receive across-the-board salary increases for the 1991-92 academic year.

FINDINGS

North Carolina Community Colleges, Four-Year Colleges and Universities: National, Regional, and State Comparisons

Average 1990-91 faculty salaries in the University of North Carolina System are competitive with the faculty salaries at other public universities regionally and nationally. The regional faculty salary rankings of UNC constituent institutions range between second and seventh and are at or above regional averages. UNC system faculty salaries averaged $43,849, compared to a regional average of $42,131 for similar institutions (SREB, 1991).

However, when comparing North Carolina's community colleges with other community colleges across the region and across the nation, North Carolina's community college faculty salaries are significantly lower (SREB, 1991).

Recognizing that the number of months faculty members are employed varies among institutions, SREB weights salaries based on reported number of months of employment. Salaries reported as 11-12 month appointments are converted to 9-10 month equivalence by reducing the reported salary by 2/11. States, including North Carolina, with distinct 10, 11, and 12 month appointments have been converted by reducing reported salaries by 1/10, 2/11, and 3/12 respectively.

Using SREB's weighting methodology, the average salary of full-time faculty of North Carolina's community colleges was $25,690 in 1990-91--$5,821 less than the regional average of $31,511 and $10,910 less than the national average (see Table 1). The average community college faculty salary in North Carolina ranks last among the 15 SREB states.

In addition to ranking last in the southeast, average earnings of North Carolina's community college faculty members do not compare favorably with similarly credentialed UNC faculty. Table 2 provides a comparison of salaries between each of the 16 constituent institutions of the UNC System and the system average for North Carolina's community colleges. Weighted average salaries of associate professors, assistant professors, and instructors are presented. Generally, associate and assistant professors have earned doctorates or equivalent degrees.

The most direct comparison between the two systems is between UNC faculty members classified as instructors and community college instructors with masters or doctorate degrees. Faculty members classified as instructors at UNC institutions typically hold masters degrees. Even with this more direct comparison, instructors at UNC institutions earned on average $8,454 more than community college instructors with masters degrees and $4,792 more per year than community college instructors who hold doctorates (see Table 2).

Table 1
Weighted Average 9-10 Month Faculty Salaries of North Carolina Public Higher Education Institutions, 1990-91

Type of Institution	University[1]	State Average[2]	Regional Ranking[3]	Regional Average[2]	National Average[2]
Doctoral I	NCSU, UNC-CH	49,068	4	47,374	49,020
Doctoral II	UNC-G	42,011	7	43,915	44,940
Doctoral III	ECU	40,951	3	38,334	41,500
Masters I	ASU, NC A&T, NCCU, UNC-C, WCU	40,948	4	38,152	44,260
Masters II	FSU,PSU, UNC-W	39,653	2	36,544	39,600
Baccalaureate	ECSU, UNC-A, WSSU	38,825	3	34,076	35,710
All UNC Institutions		43,849		42,131	44,789
Community Colleges		**25,690**	**15**	**31,511**	**36,600**

Note(1): Data for North Carolina School of the Arts not included.

Note(2): Salaries reported as 11-12 month appointments have been converted to 9-10 month equivalence by reducing the reported amounts by 2/11. States, including North Carolina, with distinct 10, 11, and 12 month appointments have been converted by reducing the reported amounts by 1/10, 2/11, and 3/12 respectively.

Note(3): State rankings based on southern regional comparisons among 15 southern states, see page 11 for listing of SREB states.

Source: SREB, Public College and University Faculty Salaries, 1990-1991.

Table 2
Comparison of the Average Salaries of Faculty on 9- and 10-month Contracts in North Carolina Public Universities and Community Colleges, 1990-1991

Institution	Instructor	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Full Professor	All Ranks
Universities					
NC School of the Arts	38,100	---	---	---	38,000
Univ. of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	37,900	38,100	47,300	65,800	50,200
Univ. of North Carolina at Greensboro	33,800	36,500	42,800	59,100	42,000
North Carolina Central University	33,400	36,200	42,900	52,100	41,800
East Carolina University	32,000	35,700	41,400	53,100	41,000
North Carolina State University	30,200	38,500	46,200	64,400	47,800
N.C. A. & T. State University	28,900	38,100	42,100	50,400	40,500
Winston-Salem State University	27,500	34,500	39,700	45,200	38,200
Appalachian State University	27,400	35,500	40,100	47,500	40,900
Univ. of North Carolina at Charlotte	---	37,000	43,800	53,200	41,200
Univ. of North Carolina at Wilmington	---	34,600	41,600	50,900	39,700
Fayetteville State University	---	34,600	41,600	50,500	39,300
Western Carolina University	---	34,300	42,200	49,400	40,300
Univ. of North Carolina at Asheville	---	34,500	44,000	52,500	40,200
Pembroke State University	---	33,600	40,300	51,700	40,000
Elizabeth City State University	---	33,500	39,000	45,200	37,800
Average University Faculty Salary	34,642	36,175	42,659	56,374	43,035

Community Colleges (NC Department of Community Colleges Data)

Ph. D Instructors	29,850
Masters Degree Instructors	26,188
Bachelors Degree Instructors	22,909

All NC Community College Instructors (By External Sources)

National Center for Education Statistics	26,141[1]
Southern Regional Education Board	25,690[2]

Sources: AAUP, ACADEME: The Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession, 1990-1991.
Department of Community Colleges, College Staff Information Data, 1990.
SREB, Public College and University Faculty Salaries, 1990-1991.

Note(1): 9-10 month faculty only.
Note(2): 9-10 month equivalents.

North Carolina Community Colleges And Other Community College Systems: National Comparison

Nationally, the average full-time salary for instructors, on 9- and 10-month contracts, in two year public institutions was $34,404 for the 1989-90 academic year (National Center for Education Statistics, 1991). North Carolina ($24,915) fell below that figure by $9,489, ranking 46th in the country only in front of Nebraska and West Virginia. Alaska, South Dakota, and the District of Columbia, did not operate comparable institutions or did not provide comparable data.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (1992), from 1989-90 to the 1990-91 academic year, North Carolina's average community college salary rose slightly to $26,141, yet fell further behind the national average of $36,600. The difference between the national average and North Carolina widened to $10,923, and the state's ranking fell to 47th.

As presented in Table 3, California and New York's public community college instructors earned the highest average salaries nationally at $47,122 and $43,373, respectively. States with faculty salaries similar to those found in North Carolina included Arkansas (46th) and Montana (48th). Virginia ranked 16th with an average two-year public college faculty salary of $35,361. South Carolina, with an average salary of $27,649, ranked 41st.

It should be noted that the average faculty salaries reported in Table 3 were obtained from the U. S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, (1992). The center reports state and national average salaries for faculty on 9- and 10-month contracts separately from faculty working on 11- and 12-month salaries. SREB, however, converts 11-12 month appointments to 9-10 month equivalents. Because of differences in methodology, average faculty salaries reported by the National Center for Education Statistics are slightly higher ($532 for North Carolina) than those reported by SREB. Both methods, however, placed North Carolina's average faculty salaries at or near the bottom regionally and nationally.

Table 3
Average Salary for Full-Time Faculty , on 9- and 10-Month Contracts, in Two-Year Public Higher Education Institutions by State, 1990-91

Rank	State	Average Salary[1]
1	California	47,122
2	New York	43,373
3	Connecticut	43,335
4	New Jersey	42,030
5	Arizona	40,478
6	Maryland	40,313
7	Illinois	40,239
8	Minnesota	39,536
9	Hawaii	38,436
10	Pennsylvania	38,392
11	Rhode Island	37,706
12	Wisconsin	37,699
13	Delaware	37,175
14	Nevada	36,434
15	Massachusetts	35,873
16	Virginia	35,361
17	Ohio	34,951
18	Missouri	34,915
19	Oregon	33,724
20	Texas	33,439
21	Alabama	33,240
22	Washington	33,156
23	Michigan	32,793
24	Florida	32,294
25	Maine	31,775
26	Georgia	31,709
27	Kansas	31,337
28	Iowa	30,745
29	New Hampshire	30,582
30	Idaho	30,532
31	Tennessee	30,509
32	Oklahoma	30,342
33	Louisiana	29,878
34	Colorado	29,606
35	North Dakota	29,438
36	Wyoming	28,930
37	Utah	28,606
38	Kentucky	28,463
39	Mississippi	28,195

Table 3 (Continued)

Rank	State	Average Salary
40	New Mexico	27,768
41	South Carolina	27,649
42	West Virginia	27,610
43	Vermont	27,546
44	Nebraska	27,393
45	Indiana	27,169
46	Arkansas	26,811
47	North Carolina	26,141
48	Montana	24,641
49	South Dakota	18,628
	SREB States	31,511
	United States	36,600

Note (1) Instructor salaries only; averages exclude full, associate, and assistant professors. Average salary for 9-10 faculty only; 11-12 month faculty are not included.

Source: The Chronicle of Higher Education; Almanac, August 28, 1991.
National Center for Education Statistics, July 1991

North Carolina Community Colleges and Other Community College Systems: Southeast Region Comparisons

When comparing North Carolina Community Colleges' average faculty salaries with those of other southern states, North Carolina ranks last with average salaries equalling $25,690. The average faculty salary for two-year institutions in the Southern Regional Education Board states in 1990-1991 was $31,511. North Carolina placed $5,821 per year lower than the average.

Between 1989-90 and 1990-91, the average instructor salary in North Carolina increased by 3.4 percent; regional and national average faculty salaries increased 3.5 and 6.1 percent respectively. As indicated in Table 4, 10 of the 15 southern region states reported one-year percentage increases that were greater than the increase in North Carolina. If this trend continues, the average salary of North Carolina's community college faculty will fall further behind that of the region and the nation.

Table 4
Average Weighted 9-10 Month Salaries of Full-time Faculty at Two-year Public Institutions in the Southern Region, 1990-91

Rank	State	Average Salary[1]
1	Maryland	39,910
2	Virginia	34,908
3	Texas	33,038
4	Florida	32,706
5	Alabama	32,615
6	Georgia	32,304
7	Louisiana	30,712
8	Oklahoma	30,638
9	Tennessee	30,438
10	Kentucky	28,530
11	West Virginia	28,485
12	South Carolina	27,789
13	Mississippi	27,336
14	Arkansas	27,310
15	**North Carolina**	**25,690**
	SREB Region	31,511
	United States	36,600

Note (1) Salaries have been converted to 9-10 month equivalence by reducing the reported annual amounts by 2/11. States, including North Carolina, with distinct 10,11 and 12 month appointments have been converted by reducing the amounts by 1/10,2/11, and 3/12 respectively.

Source: SREB, Public College and University Faculty Salaries, 1990-91.

North Carolina Community Colleges and Public Schools

The average salary of faculty members at community colleges in North Carolina for 1990-1991 was $25,690 (adjusted to a 9-10 month year) as reported by SREB (1991) while the average salary of all North Carolina public school teachers for the same year was $29,276 (Department of Public Instruction, estimated final figure). When comparing across-the-board averages, community college instructor salaries are significantly lower than public school teachers' salaries (see Table 5).

While North Carolina's community college faculty salaries rank last (15th) in the southern region, North Carolina's public school teachers' salaries rank fourth. In fact, public school teachers in North Carolina have consistently ranked above the regional SREB average since the 1979-80 academic year. North Carolina is one of only three southern region states in which the average community college faculty salary is lower than the average public school teacher's salary.

Table 5
Comparison of Average Public School Teacher Salaries and Public Two-Years Colleges in SREB Sates, 1990-91

State	Public Schools		Community Colleges	
	Salary	Rank	Salary	Rank
Alabama	27,300	10	32,612	5
Arkansas	23,040	15	27,310	14
Florida	30,387	3	32,706	4
Georgia	29,172	5	32,304	6
Kentucky	29,089	6	28,530	10
Louisiana	26,240	11	30,712	7
Maryland	38,806	1	39,910	1
Mississippi	24,443	14	27,310	13
North Carolina	29,276	4	25,690	15
Oklahoma	24,649	13	30,638	7
South Carolina	28,174	9	27,789	12
Tennessee	28,248	8	30,438	9
Texas	28,321	7	33,038	3
Virginia	32,382	2	34,908	2
West Virginia	25,958	12	28,485	11
SREB States	28,891			
United States	33,015			

Sources: SREB, Public Colleges and University Faculty Salaries, 1990-1991.
SREB, SREB Teacher Salaries: 1990-91.

SUMMARY

In most states, average community college salaries fall between those of the state's univeristy faculty and public school teachers. This is not the salary pattern in North Carolina. Average salaries for university faculty and public school teachers in North Carolina are higher than the average community college salary.

North Carolina has done a good job of positioning the average faculty salaries of the 16 UNC system institutions. Average faculty salaries at UNC institutions are at or above the regional and national averages. The worst showing for the state in 1990-91 was seventh regionally for the state's single Doctoral II institution, the University of North Carolina at Greensboro (see Table 6). Similarly, the State has succeeded in maintaining the average salary of its public school teachers at a respectable ranking of fourth out of 15 southern states. During the past five years, the State's regional ranking for average public school teacher salaries was never lower than fifth.

The situation faced by community college faculty is dramatically different from that of the state's public school teachers and university professors. The national ranking of the average salary earned by North Carolina's community college faculty has fallen from 46th in 1989-90 to 47th in 1990-91. In the southern region among these 15 states, a similar drop was noted--average North Carolina community college faculty salaries now rank last.

North Carolina's average community college faculty salaries will not reach the median of the southeast by 1992 as called for by the Commission on the Future. If the current trend is not reversed, the average faculty salary will not reach the median level of the southeast by 1995 as called for by recent system plans. Reaching the region's top quartile by 1995 seems even more remote.

North Carolina needs an exemplary faculty and staff at each of its community colleges if the system is to play an integral role in leading the state's workforce into the 21st century. Adequate salaries remain an important component in determining the system's ability to attract, retain and support highly qualified and technically skilled instructional and departmental personnel.

Table 6
Weighted Average 9-10 Month Faculty Salaries of North Carolina Public Schools and Higher Education Institutions, 1990-91

Type of Institution	University[1]	State Average[2]	Regional Ranking[3]	Regional Average[2]	National Average[2]
Doctoral I	NCSU, UNC-CH	49,068	4	47,374	49,020
Doctoral II	UNC-G	42,011	7	43,915	44,940
Doctoral III	ECU	40,951	3	38,334	41,500
Masters I	ASU, NC A&T, NCCU, UNC-C, WCU	40,948	4	38,152	44,260
Masters II	FSU,PSU, UNC-W	39,653	2	36,544	39,600
Baccalaureate	ECSU, UNC-A, WSSU	38,825	3	34,076	35,710
All UNC Institutions		43,849		42,131	44,789
Community Colleges		**25,690**	**15**	**31,511**	**36,600**
Public Schools		29,082	4	28,891	33,015

Note(1): Data for North Carolina School of the Arts not available

Note(2): Salaries reported as 11-12 month appointments have been converted to 9-10 month equivalence by reducing the reported amounts by 2/11. States, including North Carolina, with distinct 10, 11, and 12 month appointments have been converted by reducing the reported amounts by 1/10, 2/11, and 3/12 respectively.

Note(3): State rankings based on southern regional comparisons among 15 southern states, see page 11 for listing of SREB states.

Source: SREB, Public College and University Faculty Salaries, 1990-1991.

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